



## AFFORDABLE CARE ACT MASSACHUSETTS IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

June 6, 2011

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These Updates, published by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) in consultation with the other state agencies involved in ACA implementation, will bring you news related to the implementation of provisions of the ACA here in Massachusetts.

### Grants and Demonstrations

The ACA provides funding opportunities to transform how health care is delivered, expand access to care and support healthcare workforce training.

### Grant Announcements

**Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Visiting Program.** \$2951. Announced on June 1, 2011. Additional funding is available to states who have demonstrated the interest and capacity to enhance home visiting efforts. Expansion grants will fund states that have made significant progress toward high-quality home visiting programs to either enhance one or more of the priority elements of the program or initiate the statewide expansion of one priority element currently operating at the local or regional level. Development grants provide funding to states with modest home visiting programs to build on their work so far. \$66M total in 7-10 awards is available for states for the Expansion grant and \$33M total in 10-12 awards for the Development grant. Applications are due July 1, 2011. The announcement can be viewed at: [HRSA](#)

### Grant Activity

**5/27/11** DPH submitted an application to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for a second round of funding under \$4002 and \$4304 of the ACA, **Strengthening Epidemiology, Lab and Health IT in State and Local Health Departments**. Funding is to sustain activities initiated by 2010 awards including advancing implementation of electronic laboratory reporting, building prevention and control capacity in healthcare associated infections, and conducting surveillance and effectiveness activities for vaccine preventable diseases. 58 awards totaling

\$47 million will be granted to continue funding to original award recipients. The grant narrative can be read on our website under the Grants and Demonstrations section at: [MassGov](#)

## Guidance

**6/6/11** CMS issued a final rule to implement §2702 of the ACA which directs the HHS Secretary to issue Medicaid regulations **prohibiting federal payments to states under section 1903 of the Social Security Act for any amounts expended for providing medical assistance for health care-acquired conditions** specified in the regulation. It will also authorize states to identify other provider-preventable conditions for which Medicaid payment will be prohibited. The final rule is effective July 1, 2011 but gives states the option to implement between its effective date and July 1, 2012. Read the guidance at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-06-06/pdf/2011-13819.pdf>

**5/31/11** CMS released **a second round of guidance for Exchange and Medicaid Information Technology systems** to further assist states in designing and developing information technology (IT) for Exchanges. The guidance provides more details on systems requirements, funding, cost-allocation, and future guidance on the systems architecture and technical specifications. Read the second round of guidance at: <http://www.cms.gov/Medicaid-Information-Technology-MIT/Downloads/exchangemedicaiditguidance.pdf>  
Read the initial IT guidance released by CMS in November 2010 at: [HHS](#)

**5/31/11** CMS announced **a policy change to the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan (PCIP)** in states with a federally-administered PCIP program, such as Massachusetts. The change states that, as of July 1, 2011, United States citizens and nationals who have been without health insurance for at least six months can qualify for coverage if they can provide a letter from a doctor, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner dated within the past 12 months stating that they have or, at any time in the past, had a medical condition, disability, or illness. Applicants will not need to provide a denial letter from an insurance company. This could provide an additional opportunity for individuals with pre-existing conditions in Massachusetts who might have to wait up to eleven months to enroll in other plans in the state due to eligibility or open enrollment restrictions under Massachusetts law. The PCIP changes ease previous program enrollment rules, making the enrollment process continuously open for applicants. PCIP rules announced in February, 2011 similarly eased eligibility and enrollment rules for children.

CMS also announced that it will begin paying agents and brokers for successfully connecting eligible people with the PCIP program. The outreach program is designed to increase enrollment in the PCIP program by helping to reach those who are eligible but un-enrolled. HHS will also work with insurers to notify people about the PCIP option in their state when their application for health insurance is denied.

The PCIP is designed to provide a temporary option for people who haven't been able to get insurance because of a pre-existing condition. Insurance companies will be required to sell insurance to everyone beginning in 2014, regardless of their health status.

Read the press release at: <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2011pres/05/20110531b.html>

Read the fact sheet at: <http://www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/pcip05312011a.html>

For more information, including how to apply, visit: [www.pcip.gov](http://www.pcip.gov)

Prior guidance can be viewed at: [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)

## News

**6/2/11** The Bipartisan Policy Center released a **report on the role of health information technology** in delivery system, payment and insurance reforms and launched a task force, co-chaired by former Senate majority leaders Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) and Bill Frist (R-Tenn.), of health-system experts on delivery reform and Health IT. The Center held a briefing which featured keynote remarks from CMS Administrator Don Berwick.

More information on the policy briefing can be found at: [Bipartisanpolicy](#)  
Read the report at: [Bipartisanpolicy](#)

## Upcoming Events

### **Next Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting**

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Implementation meeting  
Tuesday June 21, 2011 from 3:00-4:00 P.M.  
1 Ashburton Place, 21<sup>st</sup> floor, Boston

Don't forget to add our website to your favorites: [www.mass.gov/nationalhealthreform](http://www.mass.gov/nationalhealthreform)